

Remarks

The various parts of the Office Action (and other matters, if any) are discussed below under appropriate headings.

Drawings

The drawings were objected to for including handwritten reference numerals. A substitute drawing sheet, including FIGS. 1 and 2 is included. Therefore, the objection should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112, 2nd ¶

Claims 2, 4-10 and 17-18 were rejected as being indefinite. In light of the amendments to the claims, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection is moot and should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102 and § 103

Claim 1, as amended, recites a system, which includes, *inter alia*, a central control unit coupled to at least two control apparatuses of at least two medically applicable instruments. The system includes a central input device and a central output display device coupled to the central control unit via a bus. The bus provides electrical separation between the central input device and/or the central output display device and the central control unit.

Wang et al. fails to disclose or fairly suggest a central input device and a single, central output display device coupled to a central control unit via a bus, where the bus provides electrical separation between the central input device and/or the single, central output display device and the central control unit. None of the other cited references, including Helmreich et al. and Howell et al., taken alone or in combination, fail to cure the deficiencies of Wang et al.

In addition, the dependent claims include additional features. For example, new dependent claim 19 recites that the central input device and the central output display device are comprised of a single touch screen display. This feature is not believed to be in any of the cited references.

For at least these reasons, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 and claims 2, 3, 6, 9-10 and 19 dependent therefrom distinguish patentably over the references of record. Accordingly, the rejections should be withdrawn.

Claim 11, as amended, recites a method for operating at least two medical instruments that are coupled to and exchanging data and/or information with at least one control apparatus. The method includes, *inter alia*, converting received output signal data into a unified format, and transmitting the converted data to a single, central display device coupled to the central control unit, wherein the single, central display device displays data from a medical instrument in one or more windows and/or displays data from different medical instruments in combination.

None of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, are understood to disclose or fairly suggest converting received output signal data into a unified format, and transmitting the converted data to a single, central display device coupled to the central control unit, wherein the single, central display device displays data from a medical instrument in one or more windows and/or displays data from different medical instruments in combination.

For at least these reasons it is respectfully submitted that claim 11 and claims 12 and 15-16 dependent therefrom distinguish patentably over the references of record. Accordingly, the rejections should be withdrawn.

New claim 20 recites a system that includes, *inter alia*, a central control unit coupled to input and output connections of at least two medically applicable instruments via at least two control apparatuses, and a single, central input and output display device coupled to the central control unit via a bus, wherein the bus provides electrical separation between the single, central input and output display device and the central control unit.

None of the cited references, taken alone or in combination, are understood to disclose or fairly suggest a single, central input and output display device coupled to a central control unit via a bus.

New dependent claim 22 recites that the single, central input and output display device is comprised of a single touch screen display. The cited references are also silent with respect to this recited feature.

For at least these reasons it is respectfully submitted that new claim 20 and claims 21-23 dependent therefrom distinguish patentably over the references of record.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, request is made for timely issuance of a notice of allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING (37 CFR 1.8a)

I hereby certify that this paper (along with any paper or thing referred to as being attached or enclosed) is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on the date shown below with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

Date: April 27, 2005

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